

Newsletters

MARK YOUR CALENDAR



Public Information Meetings

June 11, 2003
Henry Senachwine High School
1023 College Street
Henry, Illinois

June 12, 2003
Three Sisters Park - The Pavilion
17201 North State Route 29
Chillicothe, Illinois

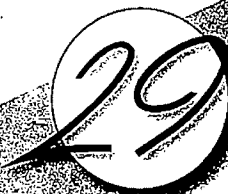
The meeting format is open house.

Please stop in any time between 4:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.



**Illinois Department
of Transportation**

Division of Highways/District 4
401 Main Street, Peoria, Illinois 61602



update

The Illinois Route 29 Design Study

This is the first issue of **29 update**, a newsletter prepared by the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) and CH2M HILL to provide information regarding the IL 29 Design Study. A total of four newsletters will be published during the course of the study.

IN THIS ISSUE

- Preliminary Alignments to be Presented at Public Meetings
- Map of Preliminary Alignments
- Description of Alignment Alternatives
- Opportunities for Public Participation
- Meeting Dates and Locations

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

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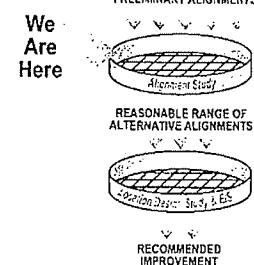
ALIGNMENTS TO BE PRESENTED AT PUBLIC MEETINGS

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) is studying alternatives to enhance continuity and to improve safety and efficiency in the Illinois Route 29 (IL 29) corridor from IL 6 near Mossville in Peoria County to the I-180 interchange in Bureau County (see Figure 1 on page 3). The purpose of the study is to identify alternatives that would improve the continuity between the freeway stubs at IL 6 and I-180 and address the efficiency of traffic movement along existing IL 29. Existing traffic volumes between IL 6 and Spauld meet IDOT's threshold for expanding from two to four lanes. Crash rates in portions of the corridor exceed the statewide average for similar highways. As traffic volumes, including truck traffic, increase throughout the study area, congestion and safety problems would be expected to increase as well.

For several months, a study team composed of IDOT and consultant engineers has been examining potential alternative alignments for an improved Illinois Route 29. The results of this undertaking will be displayed at public information meetings scheduled for June 11 in Henry, and June 12 in Chillicothe. (See the back page of this newsletter for locations and times.)

The alternative alignments will be presented at the public meetings for public review and comment. The public's input will be considered in connection with other information to select alignments for more detailed study. At the meeting, the public will have an opportunity to discuss the various alignments with members of the study team, offer comments about the concepts presented, and suggest consideration of additional options.

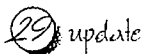
Following the public meetings and after consideration of public input, a decision will be reached as to which of the alternative alignments will be developed in more detail and analyzed in the project's Environmental Impact Statement. The results of these further studies will be presented at subsequent public meetings as well as at a public hearing, now tentatively scheduled for 2004 and early 2006.



Alignment Screening Process

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ENCLOSED

ISSUE NO. 1



ISSUE NO. 1



ALTERNATIVE ALIGNMENT

The project team has developed a number of preliminary alignment alternatives to address deficiencies along IL 29. The full range of these alternatives will be presented at the June 11th and 12th public meetings. After an initial analysis, the alternatives described below and shown on the facing page appear to have the best ability to address IL 29 deficiencies while minimizing overall impacts. These alignments may be altered or added to based on public agency input. For ease of analysis, the IL 29 corridor was divided into three segments:

- South Segment – From I-6/I-29 near Mossville to approximately Hart Lane north of Chillicothe.
- Central Segment – From north of Chillicothe to south of Henry.
- North Segment – From south of Henry to I-180 in Bureau County.

South Segment

In the south segment, there are two options shown to bypass Chillicothe on the west. Both cross diagonally between the Mossville Caterpillar facilities with an interchange at Cedar Hills Drive/Old Galena Road. Each also interchanges with Fruit Road west of Chillicothe. Alignment S-4 is located approximately one-half mile east of Krause Road, and Alignment S-5 is approximately one-quarter mile farther east. Both alignments cross the BNSF railroad tracks west of Chillicothe and then proceed northeast along the north side of the Chillicothe Recreational Area.

Central Segment

Alternative alignments in the central segment either bypass Hopewell and Sparland on the west or generally follow the present route of IL 29 with a reduced median. The Hopewell/Sparland bypass alignment approximately follows Hardscrabble Road extended, returning to existing IL 29 north of Sparland near Camp Grove Road. This alignment is referred to as C-2.

At present, there is a jog in the alignment of IL 17 between Ferry Street and Hilltop Drive in Sparland. With Alignments C-3 or C-3A, this discontinuity would be removed by re-aligning IL 17 as shown in Figure 1. Alignment C-3 follows the present route of IL 29 through Sparland. Another option in Sparland (C-3A) relocates the Iowa Interstate Railroad tracks to the east, thereby allowing a more easterly alignment of IL 29 with fewer impacts to existing residential properties.

North Segment

Two options for bypassing Henry on the west (H-3 and H-4) are currently under consideration. Either bypass alignment would avoid the disruption resulting from an alignment along existing IL 29 through Henry.

North of Henry, one alternative alignment (N-4) crosses the railroad and proceeds north to I-180 on the east side of the tracks, bypassing Putnam.

Also north of Henry, Alignment N-2 follows the present route of IL 29 with a reduced median in some sections to avoid impacts. Alignment N-2A is similar except that the existing railroad tracks would be relocated eastward to allow additional width for the highway.

Please Note: These alignments may be altered or added to through public/agency input.

PARTICIPATION

IDOT invites public participation in the process of studying the improvement of Illinois Route 29. IDOT will be seeking input from representatives of communities, agencies, businesses, and the general public. Several specific activities will provide opportunities for you to contribute to the project:

This is the inaugural issue of a series of informational newsletters like this newsletter. Future publications will provide a detachable comment form on which you may offer ideas, comments, or opinions.

At open-house public information meetings to be held in June and again later in the study process, project staff will display exhibits, provide information, and solicit input on the study.

When the preliminary Environmental Impact Statement and Combined Design Report have been completed and circulated for review, a public hearing will be held to inform the public of the study findings and to gain additional input. These documents will result in alignments and right-of-way requirements. NOT construction plans.

In addition, IDOT will hold individual meetings with representatives of local units of government, interest groups, civic groups, and industries to discuss and address specific interests and concerns.

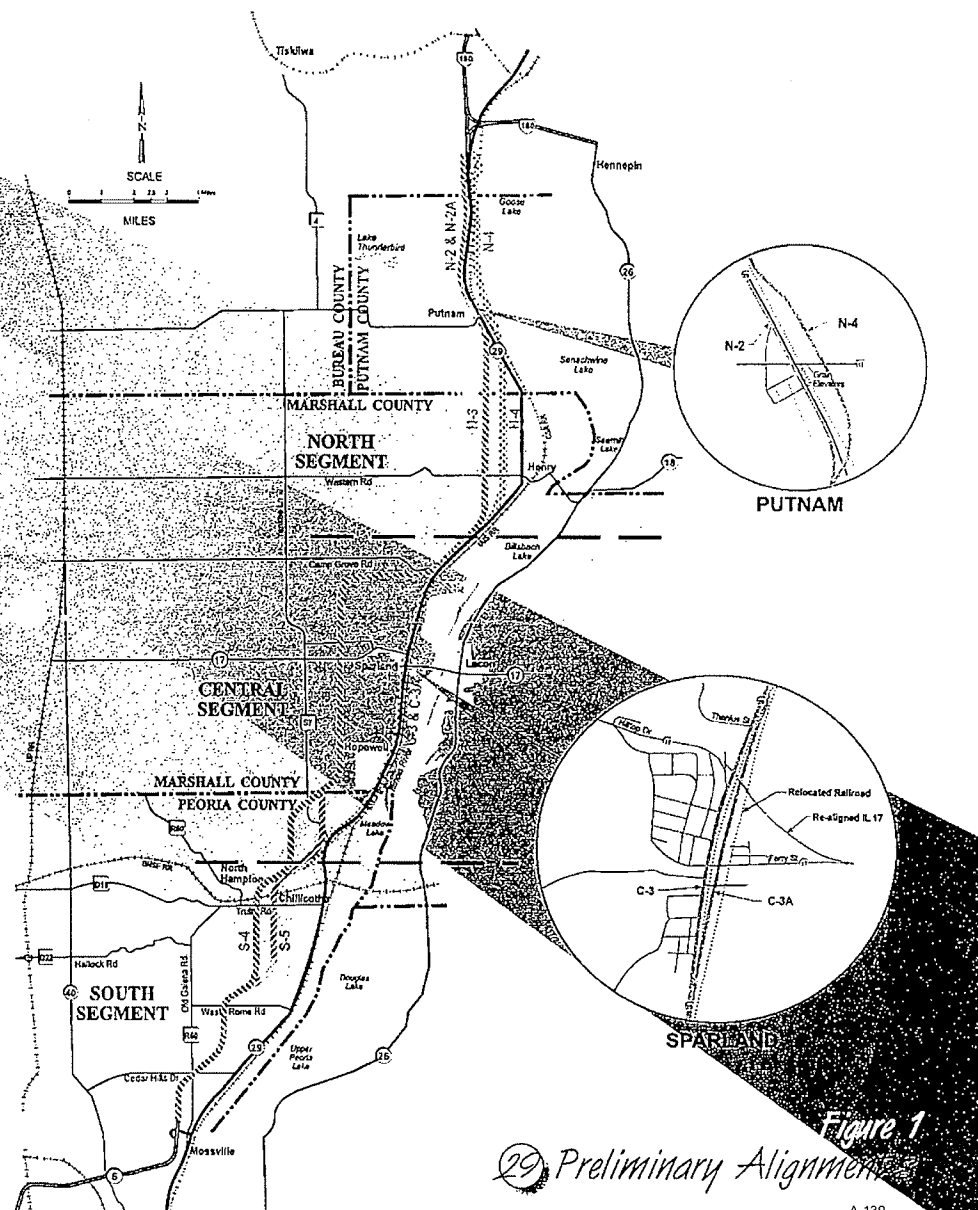


Figure 1
29 Preliminary Alignments

because of their impacts to wetlands, floodplain, and natural areas. The current version of Alternative N-2 does not relocate the railroad and has a narrow median and a retaining wall on the east side to minimize impacts to natural resources in the Miller-Anderson Woods area.

Like the Central Section, IL 29 in the North Section is designed as an expressway that can be accessed at local roads and noncommercial driveways.

In the North Section, residential and business relocations are found in Henry and Putnam. The North Section would cost approximately \$120 to \$130 million to construct. More information about project impacts will be available at the July 14 and 15 meetings.

Other Project Update Information

The project team is developing a plan to locate wildlife crossings along the IL 29 corridor to reduce the number of collisions between animals (particularly deer) and vehicles. The plan could include lengthening bridges at stream crossings, which are wildlife movement corridors, to allow deer and other animals to cross between the stream and the bridge embankment. The project team is also investigating the use of large culverts at various locations along the corridor with high vehicle-deer collisions to allow deer and other animals to cross under the highway.

The Illinois Natural History Survey (INHS) is continuing field work to evaluate upland and wetland habitat along the project's reasonable range of alternatives. They are also conducting special studies on mammals, birds, amphibians and reptiles, plants, and fish and mussels in the project area. The data gathered by the INHS will be used by IDOT to make design decisions, and it will be reported in the project's Environmental Impact Statement.

Historical and archaeological studies are also in progress. To date about 1,300 acres have been surveyed by archaeologists. Groundwater studies will be conducted this summer to determine whether the proposed improvements to IL 29 in the Miller-Anderson Woods area would affect groundwater and habitat dependent on existing groundwater levels.

Mark Your Calendar

29

Public Information Meetings

July 14, 2004
Henry-Senachwine High School
1023 College Street
Henry, Illinois

July 15, 2004
Three Sisters Park - The Pavilion
17201 North State Route 29
Chillicothe, Illinois

The meeting format is open house.

**Please stop in any time between
4:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.**



IMPORTANT INFORMATION ENCLOSED

ISSUE NO. 2 **29update**

29update

The Illinois Route 29 Design Study

This is the second issue of **29update**, a newsletter prepared by the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) and CH2M HILL to provide information regarding the IL 29 Design Study.

In This Issue:

- Alternatives to be Presented at Upcoming Public Meetings
- Map of Alternatives
- Review of Alternatives by Project Section
- Opportunities for Public Participation
- Meeting Dates and Locations

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Alternatives to be Presented at July Public Meetings

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) is continuing their study of alternatives to improve continuity and address efficiency concerns in the Illinois Route 29 (IL 29) corridor between IL 6 near Massville in Peoria County and I-180 in Bureau County. The second set of public information meetings are scheduled to be held on July 14, 2004 in Henry and July 15, 2004 in Chillicothe to inform community members on project progress. (See the back page of this newsletter for locations and times.)

The first set of public information meetings were held in mid-June 2003. At that time, IDOT informed project area residents about the purpose of the IL 29 study, presented the preliminary IL 29 corridor alignments, and received input from attendees on transportation issues and the preliminary alignments. IDOT received a wide range of public comments at the two meetings. Listed below are the common themes the public provided at the meetings.

- Concerns about residential, agricultural and other environmental impacts associated with the Henry bypass and the bluff alignment west of Springfield.
- Concerns about the visibility of communities and the impacts on local businesses along IL 29 if a bypass were constructed.
- Questions about the need for improvements to IL 29.
- A desire to improve existing roadways before building new facilities.
- Support for improving IL 29 because it would have fewer agricultural impacts than the bluff alignment.
- Support for the bluff alignment because it would reduce impacts to residences and businesses along existing IL 29.

Based on the comments from the June 2003 information meetings, agency input and additional engineering and environmental work, the project team continued to refine the preliminary alternatives in the project's South, Central, and North Sections. The alternatives that remain under consideration and the alternatives eliminated from consideration since the June 2003 public information meetings are shown on page 3. A brief description of changes to the alternatives in the South, Central, and North Sections is found on the following page.

The project team has also begun detailed engineering studies on the alternatives in the North and Central sections. The detailed studies for the South Section are forthcoming. These studies will provide IDOT, agencies, and project area property owners with information such as the limits of new right-of-way required to construct the proposed IL 29 improvements, changes in access to properties, where interchanges will be needed, and impacts to agricultural land, natural resources such as wetlands and wooded areas, and residences and businesses. Although the preliminary plans for the alignments may need some adjustments, they are useful in helping elicit further comments and input from communities and property owners along IL 29.

Alternatives Update

South Section

At the first public information meeting Alternative S-4 crossed over the Cedar Hills Drive/Old Galena Road intersection bisecting the two Massville Caterpillar facilities before connecting with the proposed Chillicothe bypass. That portion of Alternative S-4 has been eliminated from consideration. Under the current plan, it now crosses Cedar Hills Drive just west of Caterpillar's facilities and crosses Old Galena Road north of the Tech Center. An interchange is proposed at Cedar Hills Drive. After

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crossing Old Galena Road the alternative continues northeast crossing Rome West Road and Wayne Road west of Galena Knolls Subdivision. From that point the alignment is generally the same as shown at the June 2003 public meetings. Because of the change in alignment west of Catapillar, this alignment is now referred to as Alternative S-6B. Alternative S-6B was not displayed at the June 2003 public meetings.

A variation of Alternative S-6B was developed to follow property lines more closely. This alternative, called Alternative S-6C, is the same as Alternative S-6B to the point where it crosses Old Galena Road. Northeast of there, it has a more east-west alignment than Alternative S-6B, crossing Rome West Road along the east side of Galena Knolls Subdivision before rejoining Alternative S-6B and the alignment displayed at the June 2003 meetings. An interchange is planned at Truitt Road for Alternatives S-6B and 6C.

North of Chillicothe, three interchanges are being looked at to connect existing IL 29 to the Chillicothe bypass. The interchange configurations will be displayed at the July public meetings. Between the south project terminus at IL 6 and the proposed interchange north of Chillicothe, the alternatives in the South Section are being designed as a freeway. This means that the only points of access to the highway would be at interchanges.

Alternative S-5, which was located east of Alternative S-4 has been eliminated from consideration because it is less compatible with Chillicothe's plans for growth than Alternative S-6B/C, and it had greater potential impacts to the gravel pit and the Chillicothe Recreation area.

Impacts of the proposed improvements in the South Section are primarily to agricultural land. Alternatives S-6B and S-6C would each affect approximately 350 acres of farmland and would cost approximately \$160 to \$170 million to construct.

Central Section

Two alternatives remain under consideration in the Central Section. Alternative C-2, which is located along the bluff west of Hopewell and Spaulding, and Alternative C-3/C-3A, which follows existing IL 29. Alternative C-2 follows Hardscrabble Road extended and lies into existing IL 29 near Camp Grove Road. An interchange has been developed to connect the bluff alignment (Alternative C-2) to existing IL 29 north of Chillicothe. Three interchange options are being considered to connect Alternative C-3/C-3A to existing IL 29 north of Chillicothe. In addition, three interchange options have been developed in Spaulding with Alternative C-3/C-3A to connect IL 29 and IL 17.

The segment of Alternative C-3/C-3A from north of Chillicothe through Spaulding is being designed with a narrow median and retaining walls to minimize impacts to Department of Natural Resources properties, natural areas, and other properties. The bluff alignment (Alternative C-2) is designed with a wider median, and it does not require retaining walls. Both alternatives are designed as expressways meaning that access to the highway would be permitted at local roads, residences, and field entrances.

Improvements to IL 29 from Wilcox Street in Chillicothe, through the viaduct area, to the proposed interchange north of Chillicothe are under consideration. This would be constructed with either interchange in the Central Section.

The bluff alignment would require more new right-of-way and farmland than improvements along IL 29. Widening IL 29 would affect more acres of wetlands and floodplain than the bluff alignment and would displace more residences and businesses. The bluff alignment would cost approximately \$180 to \$190 million to construct, while improvements along existing IL 29 would cost between \$220 and \$240 million.

North Section

Two Henry bypass alternatives, H-3 and H-4, were displayed at the June 2003 public meetings. Improving IL 29 through Henry was eliminated before the June 2003 public meeting because of adverse impacts to the high school, fairgrounds, and local businesses/residences. After the June meetings, Alternative H-3, which was located about 1 mile west of Henry, was eliminated from further consideration because of its distance from Henry and greater impacts to farmland. Alternative H-4 was carried forward to preliminary design. An interchange is being developed along Alternative H-4 at Western Avenue.

At the June 2003 public meetings, there were two alternatives displayed from the north end of the Henry bypass to the north project terminus at I-180. Alternative N-4, which was located on new alignment east of Putnam, was eliminated from consideration because of its impacts on farmland and wetlands.

Several variations of Alternative N-2, which follows existing IL 29, were evaluated after the June 2003 public information meetings. The alternatives widened IL 29 to the east (north of Putnam) and required relocating the railroad. Those alternatives were eliminated from consideration

Opportunities for Public Participation

IDOT encourages public participation in the process of studying the Improvement of Illinois Route 29. IDOT will be seeking input from representatives of communities, agencies, businesses, and the general public. Several specific activities will provide opportunities for you to contribute to the project:

- This is the second issue of a series of informational newsletters. Like this newsletter, future publications will provide a detachable comment form on which you may offer ideas, comments, or opinions.
- At open-house public information meetings to be held in July and again later in the study process, the project staff will display exhibits, provide information and solicit input on the study.
- When the Draft Environmental Impact Statement and Combined Design Report have been completed, a public hearing will be held to inform the public of the study findings and again solicit input. These documents will result in alignments and right-of-way requirements, NOI construction plans.
- In addition, IDOT will hold individual meetings with representatives of local units of government, interest groups, civic groups and industries to discuss and address specific interests and concerns.
- Your letters with comments and suggestions are always welcome at the IDOT District office. Please address your letters to:

Eric Thekildsen, PE
Program Development Engineer
IDOT District 4
401 Main Street
Peoria, IL 61602

Those letters received within 10 days of the public information meetings will be included in the official project record.

